

Claim Amendment

1. (Currently Amended) A pan for installing solar modules, said pan comprising [[:]] a length of material having a trough-shaped cross-section which forms a trough, said trough having a bottom, two sides extending upward from said bottom, and a relatively horizontal flange at a [[the]] top of each of said sides, wherein said length comprises about 60 inches to about 65 inches.

2. (Currently Amended) The pan of claim 1 further comprising [[:]] spaced holes through said bottom, said horizontal flange, or through said bottom and said horizontal flange.

3. (Original) The pan of claim 2 wherein said material is non-corrodable.

4. (Currently Amended) The pan of claim 2 further comprising [[:]] at least one shipping insert spaced along said pan and releasably fitted into said trough, each of said shipping inserts having at least one slot adapted to receive an [[the]] edge of a solar module and each of said shipping inserts having a shape conformed to the trough, wherein each of said shipping inserts position generally transverse to said length of said pan.

5. (Currently Amended) The pan of claim 2 further comprising [[:]] a plurality of shipping inserts spaced along said pan and releasably fitted into said trough, each of said shipping inserts having a plurality of parallel slots, each of said parallel slots adapted to receive an [[the]] edge of a different solar module.

6. (Original) The pan of claim 5 wherein said shipping inserts are friction-fitted into said trough.

7. (Cancelled)

8. (Currently Amended) Δ [[An]] solar array mounted on a roof [[,]] or a support structure ~~or the like~~, said array comprising:

a plurality of pans positioned in spaced, parallel rows on said roof or support structure, each pan comprising a length of material having a trough-shaped cross-section which forms a trough, said trough having a bottom, two sides extending upward from said bottom, and a relatively horizontal flange at the top of each of said sides;

means for connecting said pans to said roof or support structure;

a plurality of solar modules; and

means for securing said solar modules to said flanges of said pans, said means for securing said solar modules to said flanges comprise clips affixed to said flanges by bolts, wherein said bolts pass through said clips and into said flanges.

9. (Currently Amended) The solar array of claim 8 wherein said means for securing said solar modules to said flanges further comprises ~~is comprised of~~ an adhesive.

10. (Currently Amended) The solar array of claim 8 wherein said means for securing said solar modules to said flanges comprise single clips or double clips of stepped-channel material affixed to said flanges.

11. (Currently Amended) The array of claim 8 wherein said bottom of each of said pans ~~pan~~ have preformed holes therethrough and wherein said means for connecting said pans to said roof or support structure comprises a fastener passing through each of said preformed holes in said bottom of each of said pans and through corresponding holes in said roof or support structure.

12. (Original) The array of claim 11 wherein said fastener comprises a threaded element having an expandable anchor on the lower end thereon; and a nut threaded onto the top of said threaded element.

13. (Original) The array of claim 11 wherein each of said plurality of rows of pans comprises a plurality of pans wherein a bottom end of one of said pan is telescoped within a top end of an adjacent pan.

14. (Currently Amended) A method of packaging solar modules for shipping, said method comprising:

releasably positioning a plurality of first spaced [[,]] shipping inserts into the trough of a first pan, said first pan comprising a length of a material having a trough-shaped cross- section which forms said trough; each of said first spaced shipping inserts having a plurality of parallel slots therein which align with said slots in the other of said first spaced shipping inserts to thereby effectively provide a plurality of parallel slots across said first pan when said first spaced shipping inserts are within said trough of said first pan, wherein each of said first spaced shipping inserts having a shape conformed to said trough, and each of said first shipping inserts position generally transverse to said length of said first pan;

placing one edge of a solar module into each of said parallel slots in said first spaced shipping inserts;

releasably positioning a plurality of second spaced shipping inserts into the trough of a second pan having the same construction as said first pan; each of said second spaced shipping inserts having a plurality of parallel slots therein which align with said slots in the other said second inserts to thereby effectively provide a second plurality of parallel, longitudinal slots across said second pan when said inserts are within said trough of said second pan, wherein each of said second spaced shipping inserts having a shape conformed to said trough, and each of said second spaced shipping inserts position generally transverse to a length of said second pan; and

placing the opposite edge of each of said solar modules into a respective parallel slot in said second spaced shipping inserts to thereby protect said edges of said module during shipping.

15. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 14 further comprising positioning a protector over each end of each of said pans and each of said solar modules after each of said modules are placed within each of said slots of each of said spaced shipping inserts of said first and second pans to thereby protect said ends of said modules during shipping.

16. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 15 further comprising securing each of said pans and said protectors around said modules to thereby form a complete package for shipping.

17. (Currently Amended) A method of installing an array of solar modules onto a roof or the like, said method comprising:

positioning a plurality of pans on said roof, each of said pans comprised of a length of material having a trough-shaped cross-section which forms a trough, said trough having a bottom which is attached to said roof, two sloping sides extending upward from said bottom, and a relatively horizontal flange at the top of each of said sides;

securing said pans to said roof;

securing said solar modules to said flanges of adjacent pans, with clips affixed to said flanges by bolts, wherein said bolts pass through said clips and into said flanges.

18. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 17 wherein said solar modules are further secured to said flanges by adhesive.

19. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 17 wherein said solar modules are secured to said flanges by single clips or double clips of stepped-channel material.

20. (Original) The method of claim 17 wherein the step of attaching said pans to said roof comprises:

positioning each pan in its desired position on the roof;

drilling holes through the roof;

passing a fastener through the drilled holes and anchoring said fastener to said roof; and

securing said pan to said fastener.

21. (Original) The method of claim 20 wherein said holes in said bottom of said pan are preformed.

22. (Original) The method of claim 20 wherein said fastener is a threaded element with an expandable anchor at one end thereof.

23. (Currently Amended) The pan of claim Claim 1 wherein said trough-shaped cross-section is a V-shaped cross-section and wherein said sides are sloping sides extending upward from said bottom.

24. (Currently Amended) The solar array of claim Claim 8 wherein said trough-shaped cross-section is a V-shaped cross-section and wherein said sides are sloping sides extending upward from said bottom.

25. (Currently Amended) The method of claim Claim 14 wherein said trough-shaped cross-section is a V-shaped cross-section.

26. (Currently Amended) The method of claim Claim 17 wherein said trough-shaped cross-section is a V-shaped cross-section and wherein said sides are sloping sides extending upward from said bottom.

27. (New) The method of claim 14 wherein said length comprises about 60 inches to about 65 inches.